@Since the State of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal were constituted in 2000-01, the agriculture land/cultivable land of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal was included in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively during the period of 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Genetic qualities of golden rice

1828. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has signed a work plan with International Rice Research Institute, Phillipines to enhance genetic qualities of 'golden rice':

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the genetically modified golden rice would curb blindness among children; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Indian Council of Agricultural Research and International Rice Research Institute, Philippines have signed a workplan for the period 2005-08 which includes a project on 'golden rice' entitled "The Development of Adapted Germplasm for India with High Levels and Provitamin Carotenoids" with an objective to transfer the Provitamin-A trait/events from 'golden rice' lines to popular Indian rice varieties.

(c) and (d) 'Golden Rice' is a variety of rice engineered to produce beta carotene (pro-vitamin A) to help to combat vitamin A deficiency which is one of the causes of blindness.

Compensation to farmers under NAIS

†1829. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the target of the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme for the year 2004-05 and the current Year to compensate losses of farmers due to natural calamity, drought or heavy rainfall;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the names of the States in which the farmers have been benefited by this plan; and

(c) the yard-sticks fixed for the farmers who have been brought under this plan?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) is a demand driven scheme. The farmers covered during 2004-05 and 1st half of the current year (*i.e.* up to 31st October, 2005) are 162.18 lakh and 110.92 lakh respectively.

(b) Under NAIS, farmers of following States have been benefited;

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Haryana, Pondicherry and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

(c) All farmers growing notified crops inthe notified areas are eligible for coverage under NAIS.

MSP for millets

†1830. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to revive the support price of millet;

(b) whether Government propose to make a fool-proof system through Food Corporation of India for the purchase of barley at the support price; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Government has announced the Price Policy for Kharif and Rabi Crops of 2005-06 Season. The Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for Millets namely Bajra, Jowar and Ragi fixed by the Government are as follows:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.